



# Cabinet Economic Development Committee

## Summary

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

### Improving Animal Welfare and Enhancing New Zealand's Reputation as a Responsible Exporter of Live Animals

<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Agriculture</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	This paper seeks agreement to explore options to improve conditions relating to the export of livestock, including a conditional prohibition on exporting livestock under the Animal Welfare Act 1999.
<b>Previous Consideration</b>	On 10 June 2019, Cabinet noted that the Minister of Agriculture will report back on a review of the trade in live animals and the options to manage the risks associated with live animal exports, including the option of a conditional ban on the live export of cattle [CAB-19-MIN-0282]. This review was publicly announced on 11 June 2019.
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The export of live animals (cattle, sheep, goats and deer) is economically valuable, earning export revenues of \$51 million in 2018 (<b>Appendix Two</b> provides further details). The export of livestock is also an important part of New Zealand's trading economy (<b>Appendix Three</b> sets out the international obligations and trade considerations).</p> <p>Animal welfare standards are a growing focus of consumers around the world, and in particular there is growing public concern about the export of large consignments of livestock.</p> <p>The export of live animals is regulated under the Animal Welfare Act – any person planning to export livestock must apply to the Director-General for an Animal Welfare Export Certificate, and the Director-General can impose conditions to mitigate the risks to animals being exported. <b>Appendix One</b> sets out the minimum conditions for livestock exports.</p> <p>Agreement is sought for the Ministry for Primary Industries to lead a review of the livestock export trade. The following five options have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a total ban on the export of livestock;</li> <li>• a conditional prohibition on the export of livestock (the preferred option at this stage);</li> <li>• collaborative programmes to build the capacity and capability at the destinations and/or encourage alternative exports;</li> <li>• continuous improvement under current regulatory settings;</li> <li>• targeted interventions, development of new operational policy, and continuous improvement.</li> </ul>

<b>Regulatory Impact Analysis</b>	Not required.
<b>Baseline Implications</b>	None.
<b>Legislative Implications</b>	None.
<b>Timing Issues</b>	A draft paper and discussion document will be prepared for cross-party consultation by the end of 2019.
<b>Announcement</b>	The Minister of Agriculture will issue a press release, announcing next steps.
<b>Proactive Release</b>	This paper will be proactively released, subject to any appropriate redactions.
<b>Consultation</b>	<p>Paper prepared by Agriculture. Customs, Justice, Transport, MFAT and NZTE were consulted. Treasury and DPMC were informed.</p> <p>The Minister of Agriculture indicates that New Zealand First, the Green Party and the Labour Party were consulted.</p>

---

**The Minister of Agriculture recommends that the Committee:**

- 1 note that public concerns about the welfare of livestock being exported are growing, and that consumers around the world are increasingly focused on the animal welfare standards;
- 2 note that once livestock has departed New Zealand, there is little ability to influence the treatment of animals at their final destinations;
- 3 note that exports of livestock (cattle, sheep, goats and deer) have been an essential part of many of New Zealand's trading relationships, and that in 2018 earned export revenues of \$51 million;
- 4 Trade relations 
- 5 direct the Ministry for Primary Industries to lead a review of the livestock export trade to improve the welfare of livestock being exported and enhance New Zealand's reputation;
- 6 note that subject to further advice from officials, the Minister of Agriculture intends to circulate a draft Cabinet paper and draft discussion paper for cross party consultation by the end of 2019.

Janine Harvey  
Committee Secretary

---

**Hard-copy distribution:**  
Cabinet Economic Development Committee  
Minister of Justice

Proactively Released